

## REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on October 16, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully considered. Additionally attached to this Amendment is a Petition for a three-month Extension of Time.

In this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 9, has canceled claims 12-13, and has added claim 17. Claim 1 is the independent claim. Claims 1-11 and 14-17 are pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9 as being obvious over *Shimizu* (USP 4,825,972) in view of *Haruhiko* (JP 2002-54720). The Examiner has further rejected claims 12 and 13 as being obvious over *Shimizu* in view of *Haruhiko*, and further in view of *Redmon* (USP 4,631,044). Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the features recited in claims 12 and 13. Accordingly, Applicant will treat the rejection of original claims 12 and 13, which have been canceled, as pertaining to claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom. It is submitted that these claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited references for at least the following reasons.

Applicant's independent claim 1 is directed to an electric power steering apparatus, which comprises an input pulley, an output pulley, a first housing accommodating the input pulley, a second housing accommodating the output pulley, and a spacer for changing a distance between centers of the input pulley and the output pulley. This claim recites that the first housing has a first section and the second housing has a second section opposed to the first section, and that the spacer is for

adjusting a spacing between the first and second sections. This claim further recites that the spacer has a plate shape and is interposed between the first and second sections. This claimed configuration significantly reduces vibration and noise when the electric power steering apparatus is used. This claimed invention is not disclosed, suggested, or taught by the cited references.

*Shimizu* is directed to a steering system for vehicles, and *Haruhiko* is directed to a synchronous belt driving gear. However, as acknowledged by the Examiner, *Shimizu* and *Haruhiko* are silent as to the first housing, the second housing and the spacer, as recited in claim 1.

Then, the Examiner relies on *Redmon* as teaching the first housing, the second housing and the spacer, as recited in claim 1. *Redmon* is directed to a speed changing device including an electric motor 10, a motor mounting plate 20, a rear housing 36 and an adjusting bolt 30. The Examiner's Action has equated the motor mounting plate 20 as being Applicant's claimed first housing. However, the motor mounting plate 20 is only fastened to the electric motor 10, but does not accommodate the drive pulley 48 that is disposed outside the motor mounting plate 20 (see *Redmon* col. 3, lines 41-42 and Figures 1 and 3). In contrast, the first housing recited in claim 1 accommodates the input pulley. In addition, the motor mounting plate 20 disclosed by *Redmon* has a plate shape, while the first housing recited in claim 1 is cylindrical. Accordingly, *Redmon* fails to disclose, suggest, or teach the first housing, as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, the spacer as recited in claim 1 is not disclosed, suggested, or taught by *Redmon*. *Redmon* discloses the adjusting bolt 30 is received in the thread hole 28 of the flange 26 disposed on the top edge of the motor mounting plate 20 (see *Resmon*

col. 3, lines 57-61 and Figures 1, 3 and 5). *Redmon* also discloses that the adjusting bolt 30 rests upon the bearing surface 38 of the rear housing 36 and is pushed against by the bearing surface 38 whenever the adjusting bolt 30 is rotated (see col. 3, lines 62-64 and Figure 5). However, the adjusting bolt 30 has a shape of a bolt, whereas, in claim 1, the spacer has a plate shape. In addition, since the bolt-shaped adjusting bolt 30 contacts with only the local portions (i.e., the flange 26 and the bearing surface 38) of the motor mounting plate 20 and the rear housing 36, the speed changing device disclosed by *Redmon* is more likely to cause vibration. On the contrary, the plate-shaped spacer recited in claim 1 ensures a larger contact area between the first housing and the second housing, and effectively prevents vibration of the electric power steering apparatus. Further, the adjusting bolt 30 penetrates the thread hole 28 of the motor mounting plate 20, while the spacer is interposed between the first section of the first housing and the second section of the second housing.

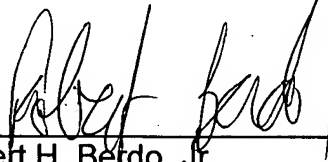
Accordingly, *Redmon* fails to disclose, suggest, or teach the spacer, as recited in claim 1.

It is thus submitted that Applicant's independent claim 1 is *prima facie* patentably distinguishable over the cited references. It is requested that claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom be allowed and that this rejection be withdrawn.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of the application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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